

pass through the brain, and we are not  
 conscious of them, and cannot perceive them.  
 Its origin  
 has been attributed to the faculty of  
 memory: it is supposed to represent a talent  
 which has been won by the trials, failures, and  
 successes of remote ancestors. But it displays  
 a mysterious complicated acuteness for  
 which this hypothesis can in no way account. The  
 female Scolia—a giant wasp of the  
 Mediterranean—burrows underground, like a mole.  
 until she comes across the fat white grub of a  
 rose-beetle (Cetonia). By a sting accurately  
 directed at the meeting-place of the nerve ganglia she  
 completely paralyses it, leaving it alive but  
 motionless. She lays her egg upon its abdomen, so  
 placed that the young worm, on emerging, will find  
 its mouth against tissues that may be eaten  
 without killing the grub—will, in fact, discover  
 nourishment which to a mammal is afforded by its  
 mother's breast. A peculiarly long snout  
 enables it searchingly to explore the body of its  
 victim. So it feeds during the fortnight of its  
 larval stage, but, guided by such discriminating  
 skill as the most practised dissector could not  
 command, it scrupulously avoids the nerves and  
 vessels, so as to spare the grub's life while  
 draining it of its substance. Did the grub die, the  
 worm would die also, for experiment has shown that  
 dead tissue poisons it. Here instinct displays not  
 only its passionless cruelty, but its mysterious

insight and  
its extraordinary skill. Could we bring  
ourselves  
to believe that an insect can pass on  
its recollections of fortuitous successes as an  
inheritance to  
its descendants. we should be no  
nearer an  
explanation. It may possibly be  
contended that  
the wasp may have discovered by  
accident. or by  
trial. that the grub was useful.  
that it could  
be hunted by burrowing, and might be  
paralysed